New Eckerd's 'robot' first in state

By DANIELLE SCHULMAN
Democrat Reporter

WEATHERFORD — Since the recent closing of the College Park and South Main Eckerd's stores, and the impending closing of the Palo Pinto location, the pharmacy in the new store on South Main has been busier than most in the big cities.

Democrat Photo By Brad Michael Moore

The robotic arm that fills prescriptions for the new Eckerd's store on South Main.

During a regular 14-hour work day in the 1,100 square foot drug mecca in the back of the store, a staff of three full-time and two part-time pharmacists, several clerks and technicians are handling, on average, 700 prescriptions per day. A pharmacy not affiliated with a chain might only fill, on average, 150 prescriptions per day.

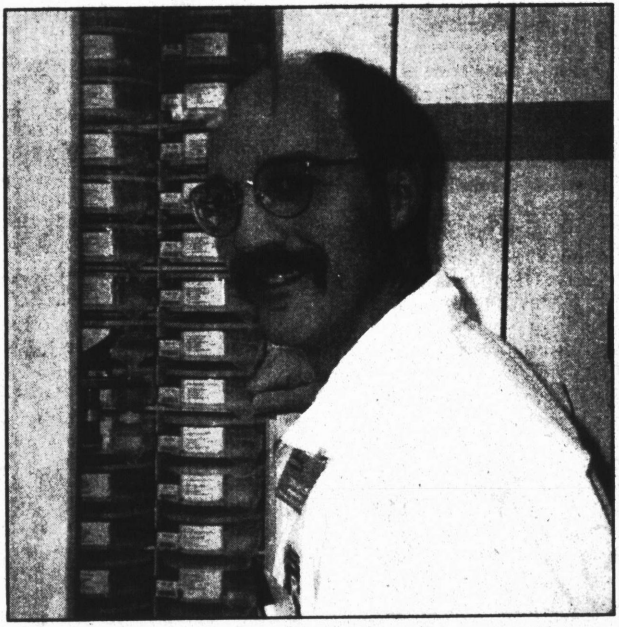
To handle business, the new store has budgeted for seven full-time pharmacists.

The physical size of the store, alone, makes it the biggest Eckerd's in the state. Its volume qualified it for new pharmaceutical technology that fills drug requests, rendering more efficiency for the staff. The device, only one of two in Eckerd's nationwide, is installed in the southeastern corner of the pharmacy, near the stockpiles of other, less-common drugs.

An Eckerd's store gets the device upon filling an average of 500 prescriptions per day. Clearly, the new store exceeded the threshold by 200 prescriptions.

The device, resembling a large mainframe full of drug containers, is supposed to replace the work that would be accomplished by one pharmacist — but it is no substitute for the work of a pharmacist. A pharmacist actually checks the work of the device for accuracy. What this device does, that a pharmacist can't do, is hold 200 of the most widely prescribed drugs.

An Eckerd's computer tells the



Democrat Photo By Danielle Schulman

Eckerd Pharmacist Creighton Maynard shows a new drug-dispensing device.

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